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## TPS CONSIDERATIONS: HAITI (DECEMBER 2016)

### BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

The January 12, 2010 earthquake that struck Haiti caused extensive damage to the country's physical infrastructure and public health, agricultural, housing, transportation, and educational facilities. Haitian government estimates of the death toll caused by the earthquake have ranged from 230,000 to as high as 316,000 people, though the accuracy of differing estimates is in dispute.<sup>1</sup> Estimates of people internally displaced range from approximately 1.5 million<sup>2</sup> to 2.3 million<sup>3</sup> at the peak of displacement. Destruction from the earthquake was compounded by Haiti's weak infrastructure, low levels of socio-economic development, and the government's inability to provide minimum basic services prior to the earthquake.

Nearly seven years later, Haiti continues to recover from the devastating 2010 earthquake. A coordinated international effort and strong partnership with the Haitian people resulted in emergency response activities that saved lives and laid a foundation for Haiti to rebuild. While Haiti continues to make progress in a variety of fields, the pace and scope of recovery has been uneven, and the country remains vulnerable to external shocks and internal fragility. Many of the conditions prompting the original January 2010 TPS designation persist, including a housing shortage, a cholera epidemic and limited access to medical care, damage to the economy (including extensive damage to Haiti's physical infrastructure), political instability, security risks, food insecurity, and environmental risks (as exemplified by the impact of Hurricane Matthew in October 2016).

### HOUSING SHORTAGE

While Haiti has made progress in finding temporary housing solutions for people internally displaced by the earthquake, significant challenges remain. Even before the 2010 earthquake,

<sup>1</sup> O'Conner, Maura R., *Two Years Later, Haitian Earthquake Death Toll in Dispute*, Columbia Journalism Review, Jan. 12, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> *Status of Post-Earthquake Recovery and Development Efforts in Haiti (December 2014)*, U.S. Department of State, Dec. 2014.

<sup>3</sup> *Key Statistics*, Office of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Community-Based Medicine & Lessons from Haiti, United Nations, 2012.

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Haiti faced a substantial national housing deficit, estimated at 700,000 housing units.<sup>4</sup> With an estimated \$2.3 billion in damages—approximately 40% of the total—the housing sector was the most impacted by the earthquake.<sup>5</sup> The Haitian government estimates that 105,000 houses were destroyed and 188,383 houses collapsed or suffered considerable damage.<sup>6</sup> The International Organization for Migration (IOM) claims that 1.5 million Haitians were internally displaced and moved into internally displaced person (IDP) camps and other temporary sites following the disaster.<sup>7</sup>

While the number of IDP camps and displaced individuals from the 2010 earthquake has significantly declined, Haiti still faces considerable obstacles related to housing. According to the latest data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), from July 2010 to September 2016, 96 percent of IDPs have left camps and temporary sites, and 98 percent of sites housing IDPs have closed.<sup>8</sup> However, many individuals who have left the camps have “moved back to unsafe houses or started building or reconstructing their houses, in most cases with no assistance or guidance, and often in informal settlements located in hazardous areas.”<sup>9</sup> Amnesty International has also claimed that over 60,000 IDPs have been forcibly evicted from camps since 2010 by private landowners, often with the assistance or implicit support of Haitian authorities.<sup>10</sup> In addition, 55,107 individuals (14,593 households) are still living in 31 displacement sites.<sup>11</sup> According to Amnesty International, living conditions in IDP camps have “progressively worsened as many humanitarian programmes have ended due to lack of funding and in line with the overall strategy of closing camps.”<sup>12</sup>

While IDP camps are closing, Haiti’s housing shortage remains far from resolved. The 2010 earthquake exacerbated the country’s pre-existing shortage of adequate and affordable housing.<sup>13</sup> The Government of Haiti has estimated that the country will need as many as 500,000 additional housing units to make up for its shortage prior to the earthquake, to replace housing lost as a

<sup>4</sup> *Ten facts about Haiti's housing crisis*, Amnesty International, Jan. 12, 2015, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2015/01/ten-facts-about-haiti-s-housing-crisis/>, (last visited Mar. 16, 2015).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Key Statistics*.

<sup>7</sup> *Five Years After 2010 Earthquake, Thousands of Haitians Remain Displaced*, International Organization for Migration, Jan. 9, 2015, <https://www.iom.int/news/five-years-after-2010-earthquake-thousands-haitians-remain-displaced>, (last visited Dec. 21, 2016).

<sup>8</sup> *Response to January 12th 2010 Earthquake - Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Haiti Round 27 - Sept 2016*, International Organization for Migration, Government of Haiti, Haiti Shelter Cluster, CCCM Cluster, Sep. 25, 2016.

<sup>9</sup> *Haiti: internal displacement, forced evictions, statelessness - the catalogue to violations continue*, Amnesty International, p.6, Mar. 31, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> *"15 Minutes to Leave": Denial of the Right to Adequate Housing in Post-Quake Haiti*, Amnesty International, p.9, 21, Jan. 2015; *Haiti: internal displacement, forced evictions, statelessness - the catalogue to violations continue*.

<sup>11</sup> *Response to January 12th 2010 Earthquake - Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Haiti Round 27 - Sept 2016*.

<sup>12</sup> *Haiti: internal displacement, forced evictions, statelessness - the catalogue to violations continue*, p.5.

<sup>13</sup> *Haiti - Housing and Settlements Fact Sheet (2016)*, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), p.1, Jan. 2016.

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result of damage from the disaster, and to accommodate projected urban growth.<sup>14</sup> An unclear land tenure system, unplanned growth in urban areas, and a lack of government capacity represent other impediments to Haiti's ability to meet its housing needs.<sup>15</sup>

### CHOLERA EPIDEMIC AND HEALTHCARE

Haiti's longstanding public health challenges were exacerbated by the January 2010 earthquake and an ongoing cholera epidemic that started in October 2010. Prior to the earthquake, 40 percent of the population lacked access to basic health services.<sup>16</sup> Haiti also had the highest infant mortality rates, chronic malnutrition indicators, and tuberculosis rate in the Western Hemisphere, and the region's second highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate.<sup>17</sup> According to the U.S. Department of State, the earthquake had a devastating impact on Haiti's health infrastructure, "destroying and damaging many clinics and hospitals, disabling thousands of people, and initially displacing 1.5 million to camps, with elevated risks of communicable diseases."<sup>18</sup>

While Haiti has made some progress in the health sector in recent years, significant challenges remain.<sup>19</sup> According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Haiti "reports some of the world's worst health indicators."<sup>20</sup> Approximately 40 percent of the population still lacks access to fundamental health and nutrition services.<sup>21</sup> Public spending in the health sector is low, and the country has a limited number of health professionals and a deficit of health infrastructure.<sup>22</sup>

A cholera epidemic—reportedly the largest such epidemic ever registered—continues to place additional strains on Haiti's beleaguered public health system.<sup>23</sup> Since October 2010, close to 800,000 Haitians have reportedly contracted cholera, and nearly 10,000 people have been killed by the disease (which was allegedly introduced by UN peacekeepers).<sup>24</sup> While progress has been made in combatting cholera, the lack of access to safe drinking water and Haiti's weak sanitation infrastructure remain significant concerns.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> *Fast Facts on the U.S. Government's Work in Haiti: Global Health*, U.S. Department of State, Jul. 19, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> *Haiti - Health Fact Sheet (2016)*, U.S. Agency for International Development, Jan. 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid p.1.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> *ECHO Factsheet - Haiti - June 2016*, European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, p.1, Jun. 2016.

<sup>24</sup> *Hurricane Matthew: '1.4 million need help in Haiti'*, Al Jazeera, Oct. 11, 2016; Partlow, Joshua, *In the wake of Matthew, Haitian towns struggle with cholera*, Washington Post, Oct. 9, 2016; Zavis, Alexandra, *U.N. admits a role in deadly Haiti cholera epidemic*, Los Angeles Times, Aug. 18, 2016; Yakupitiyage, Tharanga, *UN "Profoundly Sorry" for Haiti Cholera Outbreak*, Inter Press Service, Dec. 2, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> *ECHO Factsheet - Haiti - June 2016*, p.1.

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### DAMAGE TO ECONOMY

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with poverty, corruption, vulnerability to natural disasters, and low levels of education serving as significant obstacles to sustained economic development.<sup>26</sup> Haiti's weak infrastructure limits investment, and the country remains vulnerable to natural disasters and dependent on foreign aid for more than 20% of its annual budget.<sup>27</sup> The 2010 earthquake caused \$7.8 billion in damages and losses to the country's economy—"equivalent to more than 120 percent of Haiti's 2009 gross domestic product (GDP)"<sup>28</sup>—and destroyed over 90 percent of buildings in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital, including hospitals, schools, physical infrastructure, and transportation facilities.<sup>29</sup> Although Haiti's economy started to recover from the earthquake in 2011—with economic growth at 5.5%—growth slowed to 2% in 2015 as a result of political uncertainty, drought, and currency depreciation.<sup>30</sup>

While Haiti has made slight improvements in reducing poverty levels and increasing access to education and sanitation since 2000, a 2014 World Bank report notes that the "wealth generated in the country is largely inadequate to meet the needs of the people."<sup>31</sup> Close to 6.3 million people (58.7 percent of the population) are living in poverty and unable to meet their basic needs; 2.5 million people (23.9 percent) are living in extreme poverty and cannot cover their basic food needs.<sup>32</sup> An additional one million people are at risk of falling into poverty following an external shock, such as a natural disaster.<sup>33</sup> High unemployment (approximately 40% of the population is unemployed), a dependence on subsistence agriculture, recurring natural disasters, and a largely informal economy represent additional challenges to sustained economic growth.<sup>34</sup>

### POLITICAL INSTABILITY

Even before the earthquake, the Haitian government "could not or would not deliver core functions to the majority of its people."<sup>35</sup> The January 2010 earthquake had an immediate impact on governance and the rule of law in Haiti, killing an estimated 18 percent of the country's civil service and destroying key government infrastructure, including the National Palace, 28 of 29 government ministry buildings, the National Police headquarters, and various

<sup>26</sup> *The World Factbook: Haiti*, CIA, Nov. 21, 2016, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html>, (last visited Dec. 19, 2016).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Key Statistics*.

<sup>29</sup> *Haiti: Infrastructure*, IHS Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Central America and the Caribbean, Nov. 21, 2016.

<sup>30</sup> *The World Factbook: Haiti*.

<sup>31</sup> *Poverty and Inclusion in Haiti: Social gains at timid pace*, The World Bank Group, p.1-2, 2014.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4

<sup>34</sup> *Haiti - Economic Growth and Agricultural Development Fact Sheet*, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Jan. 2016.

<sup>35</sup> *Haiti - Democracy, Human Rights & Governance Fact Sheet*, U.S. Agency of International Development (USAID), p.1, Mar. 2016.

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judicial facilities.<sup>36</sup> Due in part to concerns about corruption and obstructionism—including reports that government officials demanded large fees to allow humanitarian assistance into the country—less than 10 percent of recovery and relief spending was channeled through government agencies.<sup>37</sup> As of January 2016, many government buildings had not yet been rebuilt.<sup>38</sup>

According to USAID, Haiti lacks fully-functioning governance institutions, enforceable legal norms, and qualified and trained government staff—all of which contribute to low levels of faith in government among the Haitian people.<sup>39</sup> Political instability and repeatedly delayed elections have undermined reconstruction efforts in Haiti.<sup>40</sup> The first round of the most recent presidential election in Haiti was held on October 25, 2015.<sup>41</sup> However, opposition candidates and human rights and religious groups expressed allegations of fraud, which contributed to violent protests.<sup>42</sup> The second-round of the election did not occur as scheduled prior to the end of President Michel Martelly's term on February 7, 2016, leaving Haiti without an elected president.<sup>43</sup> Jocelerme Privert, who was president of Haiti's Senate, took over as interim president; however, a new election did not occur before his mandate ended on June 15, 2016.<sup>44</sup> On November 20, 2016, Jovenel Moïse, a banana plantation owner, was elected president with enough votes to avoid a run-off.<sup>45</sup>

### SECURITY RISKS

By creating new security vulnerabilities and stimulating an increase in crime, the 2010 earthquake had a deleterious impact on public security in Haiti.<sup>46</sup> The escape of thousands of prisoners and the diffusion of gangs throughout Port-au-Prince in the aftermath of the earthquake overwhelmed Haiti's historically weak justice system and police.<sup>47</sup> An overall climate of insecurity in IDP camps left many IDPs vulnerable to violence and crime, including gender-based violence, theft, and domestic violence.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Fast Facts on the U.S. Government's Work in Haiti: Governance, Rule of Law, and Security*, U.S. Department of State, Dec. 31, 2014.

<sup>37</sup> *A march around the institutions: Lessons from Haiti's earthquake*, The Economist, Jan. 17, 2015.

<sup>38</sup> Moloney, Anastasia, *Factbox: Haiti six years after the quake - What's changed?*, Thomson Reuters Foundation, Jan. 12, 2016.

<sup>39</sup> *Haiti - Democracy, Human Rights & Governance Fact Sheet*, p.1.

<sup>40</sup> Moloney; Charles, Jacqueline, *Haiti's hurricane-delayed elections now set for Nov. 20*, Miami Herald, Oct. 14, 2016.

<sup>41</sup> Hersher, Rebecca, *Haiti's Presidential Election Delayed In Wake Of Hurricane*, NPR, Oct. 5, 2016.

<sup>42</sup> Charles, Jacqueline, *Banana farmer wins Haiti presidency, according to preliminary results*, Miami Herald, Nov. 28, 2016.

<sup>43</sup> Hersher.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Charles, *Banana farmer wins Haiti presidency, according to preliminary results*.

<sup>46</sup> Berg, Louis-Alexandre, *Crime, Politics and Violence in Post-Earthquake Haiti*, United States Institute of Peace, p.1-2, Sep. 28, 2010.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*



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In August 2016, the United Nations Secretary General reported that the security situation in Haiti remained “relatively calm but fragile,” due to political uncertainty; a number of cases of political violence and an increase in the number of demonstrations, sit-ins, and strikes were reported in the months prior to the publication of the aforementioned report.<sup>49</sup> The U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security has reported that homicide, armed robberies, and crimes against persons (including gender-based violence) remain major concerns in Haiti.<sup>50</sup> In general, Haitians “lack basic policing services,” and criminals are able to operate without fear of the police.<sup>51</sup> In October 2016, the United Nations Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) until mid-April 2017.<sup>52</sup>

### FOOD SECURITY

Damage from the 2010 earthquake exacerbated Haiti’s historic food security challenges. The earthquake displaced over 600,000 people from urban to rural areas, and caused significant damage to physical infrastructure; these factors contributed to a sharp decline in income, crop production, and food availability, as well as an increase in the price of food in the aftermath of the earthquake.<sup>53</sup> While the international community provided emergency food assistance and support for the agricultural sector to help avert a post-earthquake food crisis, food security remains a significant challenge for Haiti.<sup>54</sup> In recent years, food and nutritional security have gradually deteriorated due to the impact of Tropical Storm Isaac and Hurricane Sandy in 2012, “followed by recurring episodes of severe drought recently exacerbated by the impact of El Niño.”<sup>55</sup> In September 2016, an estimated 3.2 million people were food insecure.<sup>56</sup>

### ENVIRONMENTAL RISK

Haiti is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to environmental hazards.<sup>57</sup> According to the World Bank and the Government of Haiti, “over 93 percent of Haiti’s surface and more than 96 percent of its population are at risk of exposure to two or more hazards,” making Haiti the world’s fifth most at risk country to multiple hazards.<sup>58</sup> Haiti is located at the intersection of

<sup>49</sup> *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti*, United Nations Security Council, p.3, Aug. 31, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> *Haiti 2016 Crime & Safety Report*, U.S. Department of State, Mar. 1, 2016.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Security Council extends UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti for six months*, UN News Centre, Oct. 13, 2016.

<sup>53</sup> *Special Report: FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission to Haiti*, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations & The World Food Programme, Sep. 21, 2010, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/ak353c/ak353e00.htm>, (last visited Dec. 21, 2016).

<sup>54</sup> *Haiti: six months on, agriculture needs more support*, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Jul. 15, 2010, <http://www.fao.org/emergencies/fao-in-action/stories/stories-detail/en/c/147984/>, (last visited Mar. 18, 2015).

<sup>55</sup> *ECHO Facisheet – Haiti – June 2016*, p.2.

<sup>56</sup> *Haiti: Humanitarian Snapshot*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Sep. 26, 2016.

<sup>57</sup> *Investing in people to fight poverty in Haiti: Reflections for evidence-based policy making*, The World Bank Group, p.135, 2014.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

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clashing tectonic plates, which—as the 2010 earthquake demonstrated—places it at high risk of seismic activity.<sup>59</sup> Haiti's location in the middle of the “hurricane belt” exposes the country to severe hurricanes and tropical storms every June to October.<sup>60</sup> Haiti also suffers from floods, landslides, and droughts.<sup>61</sup> Extensive deforestation has left Haiti with less than two percent forest cover,<sup>62</sup> aggravating flash floods that cause erosion and wash away large amounts of topsoil.<sup>63</sup>

### HURRICANE MATTHEW

The strongest storm to hit Haiti in more than 50 years and the most powerful Atlantic storm since 2007, Hurricane Matthew made landfall in southwestern Haiti as a Category 4 hurricane on October 4, 2016.<sup>64</sup> With 145-mile-an-hour winds and torrential rains,<sup>65</sup> Hurricane Matthew “violently struck south-western Haiti...causing widespread damage, flooding and displacement.”<sup>66</sup> Heavy flooding occurred in the most affected departments,<sup>67</sup> including Grand’Anse, South, Nippes and South East departments.<sup>68</sup> Per the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the impact of the hurricane occurred “at a time when the country is already facing an increase in the number of cholera cases and severe food insecurity and malnutrition.”<sup>69</sup>

Hurricane Matthew caused significant damage in Haiti, including by destroying or damaging homes and schools, killing livestock, contaminating water sources, and destroying crops and food reserves.<sup>70</sup> In the aftermath of the storm, towns along the southwest coast of Haiti were described as in a state of “near total destruction,”<sup>71</sup> with some towns and villages “almost wiped off the map.”<sup>72</sup> A United Nations official stated that the hurricane had caused the worst

<sup>59</sup> *Haiti: Executive Summary*, IHS Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Central America and the Caribbean, May 23, 2014.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *2014 Periodic Monitoring Report, January-December 2014, Haiti*, The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), p.2, Jan. 2015.

<sup>62</sup> *Key Statistics*.

<sup>63</sup> *Haiti: Executive Summary*.

<sup>64</sup> *Hurricane Matthew: '1.4 million need help in Haiti'*, *Haiti: Hurricane Matthew Emergency Appeal n° MDRHT012*, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, p.1, Oct. 6, 2016.

<sup>65</sup> Beaubien, Jason, *How Many Houses Did Hurricane Leave Standing In Port Salut, Haiti?*, NPR Morning Edition, Oct. 11, 2016; Guyler Delva, Joseph, *Hurricane Matthew toll in Haiti rises to 1,000, dead buried in mass graves*, Reuters, Oct. 10, 2016.

<sup>66</sup> *Haiti: Hurricane Matthew – Situation Report No.6*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), p.1-4, Oct. 10, 2016.

<sup>67</sup> Haiti is divided administratively into 10 departments. See *The World Factbook – Haiti*

<sup>68</sup> *Haiti: Hurricane Matthew – Situation Report No.6*, p.1-4.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>70</sup> *Hurricane Matthew: '1.4 million need help in Haiti'*, *Haiti: Hurricane Matthew – Situation Report No.6*, p.3.

<sup>71</sup> Hume, Tim, Sterling, Joe, Watson, Ivan, and Darlington, Shasta, *Haitian leader: Cholera kills 13 after Matthew*, CNN, Oct. 10, 2016.

<sup>72</sup> *Hurricane Matthew: '1.4 million need help in Haiti'*.

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humanitarian crisis in Haiti since the 2010 earthquake.<sup>73</sup> Many individuals in affected areas lacked access to radio or television, and received “little to no warning from the Haitian government” about the potential severity of the storm.<sup>74</sup> According to UNOCHA, Hurricane Matthew affected an estimated 2.1 million people in Haiti (approximately 20% of the population).<sup>75</sup> Over 175,000 people were displaced, and at least 546 individuals have died.<sup>76</sup> By mid-December 2016, as many as 1.4 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, while 806,000 people were severely food insecure.<sup>77</sup>

### SUMMARY

With the support of the international community, Haiti continues to rebuild following the 2010 earthquake. However, Haiti’s progress remains fragile and vulnerable, and the country faces serious challenges, including a housing shortage, a cholera epidemic and limited access to medical care, damage to the economy, political instability, security risks, food insecurity, and considerable environmental risk. The deleterious impact of Hurricane Matthew in October 2016 has further hindered Haiti’s ability to recover from the 2010 earthquake.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> *Fear of cholera epidemic grows in Haiti after Hurricane Matthew*, CBS News, Oct. 11, 2016.

<sup>75</sup> *Haiti: Hurricane Matthew – Situation Report No.14*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), p.1, Oct. 21, 2016; *Situation Update: 20% of Haitian population affected by Hurricane Matthew*, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development, Oct. 10, 2016.

<sup>76</sup> *WFP Haiti – Situation Report #30*, World Food Programme, p.1, Dec. 15, 2016; Miroff, Nick, *A month after Hurricane Matthew, 800,000 Haitians urgently need food*, Washington Post, Nov. 3, 2016.

<sup>77</sup> *WFP Haiti – Situation Report #30*, p.1.